

RISD

Hurricane Preparedness

- **Hurricane**

It is the policy of RISD to view each hurricane threat as an extremely hazardous condition. As such, our goal is to minimize the risk to personnel consistent with protecting college property and assets. Recent experiences throughout the coastal region of our country have shown *timely preparation* is the key to survival when faced with such a dangerous force of nature.

Emergency Terminology:

- *Tropical Disturbance* – An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 38 mph (33 knots) or less.
- *Tropical Storm* - An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph (34-63 knots).
- *Hurricane* – An intense tropical weather system with a well defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 74 mph (65 knots) or higher.
- *Hurricane Watch* - Issued for a coastal area when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.
- *Hurricane Warning* – Issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less.
- *Hurricane Season* – June 1st – November 30th
- *Flash Flood Watch* - A flash flood is possible in the area; stay alert.
- *Flash Flood Warning* – A flash flood is imminent; take immediate action.
- *Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale* – A disaster potential scale which assigns storms to five categories. This can be used to give an

estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast with a hurricane.

- Category One: Winds 74-95 mph, surge 4-5 feet
- Category Two: Winds 96-110 mph, surge 6-8 feet
- Category Three: Winds of 111-130 mph; surge 9-12 feet
- Category Four: Winds 131-155 mph; surge 13-18 feet
- Category Five: Winds 155+ mph; surge 18+ feet

Outline of the College's Emergency Plan for Hurricanes:

The College's plan for hurricanes is divided into six (6) stages, which generally conform to the hurricane stages identified by the National Weather Service. They are:

Stage I – Pre-Hurricane Meeting (72 hours – 3 days):

Stage II – Hurricane Watch (30 hours – 1 ¼ days)

Stage III – Hurricane Warning (24 hours – 1 day)

Stage IV – Hurricane Warning (12 to 16 hours – ½ to ¾ day)

Stage V – During the Hurricane:

Stage VI – Post Hurricane:

The action steps indicated may or may not be taken within the stages listed, depending on the circumstances of the storm and time of day in which the stage occurs.

Stage I – Pre-Hurricane Meeting (72 hours – 3 days):

RISD Hurricane Preparedness Committee (those staff members who hold positions in departments who can activate the resources necessary to effectively deal with the pending hurricane threat and to assess the situation) shall meet to discuss the storm. Members of the Hurricane Preparedness Committee:

AVP Finance and Business Services

RISK Manager-insurance

Asso. Provost for Academic Affairs

Dean of Students – Student Evacuation \Shelter

Media – External Media/Parents/Students/Faculty/Staff

AVP of Facilities – Buildings / Grounds

Director of Facilities Operations

Director of Residence Life - Students

AVP OIT- Technology

Director of Public Safety – Safety / Security Concerns

Director of Dining Services – Food Concerns

Director of Health Services – Health Services

Director of Library Services – Library Contents & Concerns

Director of Environment, Health and Safety-environmental

At this meeting, steps should be taken to assure that the needed **resources will be available in a timely manner in the event Stage II is implemented**. Some topics of concern should be:

- evacuation center (if remaining on campus)
- food and water supplies
- electrical service for cooking, heating and lighting
- protection of College buildings and property from wind and rain
- facilities equipment readiness
- medical emergencies contingencies
- telecommunication concerns
- notification procedures
- security of College property
- generator for Switch Room
- telephone
 - special needs students who may require additional assistance

Upon activation of this team, all department heads, their key associates and other essential employees should make immediate provisions for the safety of their family and personal property in order that they may attend to their College responsibilities. Although additional meetings might be needed before **Stage II** occurs, regular telephone updates from these departments coordinating their efforts will be required. These principal team members are expected to delegate duties to their subordinates as necessary.

The Dean of Students will send an informational letter to all RISD students regarding the hurricane.

Hurricane Advisory Letter

“The National Weather Service has reported that Hurricane _____ is presently on a course that might hit Rhode Island in seventy-two hours (3 days). The RISD Hurricane Preparedness Committee has met and steps are being taken to ensure the safety of the RISD community. Any decision pertaining to closing school, remaining on campus or going home, among other issues, will be forthcoming approximately thirty hours (1¼ days) prior to the storm’s expected arrival.”

Stage II – Hurricane Watch (30 hours – 1 ¼ days)

If a decision is made to suspend classes and close school the announcement should be made at this time.

The Director of Residence Life:

- Will instruct all residents planning to leave campus to do so within 6 hours and check out with RA staff before departing. Final resident plans/alternative contact information will be collected from each RA and

potential “host” rooms will be instructed to prepare for arrival of additional students.

The following Directors will initiate plans discussed during the Stage I – Pre-Hurricane Meeting:

Director of Facilities:

- Initiate the plan for securing all outside equipment and College property, which may be blown about during the storm, and secure all buildings.
- Remove all outdoor furniture and trash receptacles.
- Inventory all equipment to insure that adequate equipment and fuel is available for clean up.
- Shut off natural gas in non-essential buildings.
- All storm drains should be checked.
- Generator for Switch Room / Telephone.

Director of Dining Services:

- Initiate plans for feeding a minimum of one thousand (1,000) people for a minimum of three days.
- Determine the water needs for food preparation, cooking and cleaning.
- Coordinate with the Business Services Manager to purchase supplies needed for housing personnel at the Quad and clean up after the storm.

Director of Public Safety:

- The Director of Public Safety will be responsible for tracking the storm and advising the College of the storm track.
- Maintain communication with Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) and Providence Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

- Check all buildings and grounds and advise responsible Directors of potential hazards.
- 4th floor of the Prov/Wash building will serve as the Emergency Operations Command Center dependant on the storm. The Emergency Operations Command Team will meet at this location (pre-storm, during the storm and post-storm).
- Ensure that enough portable radios are available to coordinate efforts.
- Contact those agencies within the City of Providence (Fire and Police Departments and the American Red Cross) and coordinate efforts with them in the event that their assistance is needed.

AVP of OIT:

- Ensure that the switchboard will be kept in operation on a twenty-four (24) hour basis as long as possible.
- Switchboard message should be updated to reflect College's current plan.

Director of Facilities Operations:

- Coordinate the closing of all windows in Residence Halls and Administrative and Academic buildings.
- Coordinate with the Business Services Manager the purchase of supplies needed for housing personnel and clean up after the storm.

VP Media

- Coordinate and disseminate appropriate information to the media as quickly as possible if appropriate.
- Update RISD. edu website with current information

Director of Health Services:

- Take steps to have the required personnel and emergency first aid equipment available, to provide coverage for those at the Quad during the duration of the storm.

Stage III – Hurricane Warning (24 hours – 1 day)

- Make tentative decision (finalized at Stage IV) on relocation/evacuation or “remain in place” for resident students and initiate appropriate plans to prepare for action.
- Possible decisions:
 1. A mandatory, state ordered **evacuation** of 15 West and Charles Landing residents may be ordered by state authorities due to potential flooding concerns.
 2. The Dean of Students may decide that students from 15 West and Charles Landing should **relocate** during the storm or that ALL students should relocate during the storm.
 3. The Dean of Students may determine that residents students should simply remain in their assigned buildings for the duration of the storm.
 - In the event of evacuation or relocation, 15 West residents will relocate to the Quad area and those students residing on the Charles Street side at Charles Landing will move to the N. Main St. side. In the event that the Dean of Students determines that residents of other buildings (Hill Houses, Colonial Apartments, etc.) should also relocate, they will be directed to the Met. Residents will remain in their designated locations until the storm has passed. The actual moving of resident students should be initiated approximately eight to

twelve hours before the storm is expected (see Stage IV – Hurricane Warning for specifics).

- The Quad facility was chosen for several reasons:
 - Size of the building
 - Emergency generator equipped
 - Bathroom/shower facilities
 - Close to the MET (food)
 - Away from large trees and up the hill from potential flooding
 - Ease of coordination and control
 - The Charles Landing N. Main St. side was chosen because it is on higher ground
- Residence Life should maintain a list of students who evacuated with destinations and contact information.
- The RISD hurricane readiness plan should be near completion. Those Director's cited above must ensure that their individual responsibilities are, or are near, completed. The Director of Risk Management will oversee this operation.
- Make final inspection of outside areas.

Stage IV – Hurricane Warning (12 to 16 hours – ½ to ¾ day)

- Dismiss all non-essential employees.
- The Dean of Students in conjunction with the Emergency Operations Team will determine the time (within the 8-12 hour window) when students will relocate from the Residence Halls and Apartments or remain place. If relocation is necessary, the students will be expected to walk to the new location when instructed to do so..

- Notification to resident students that a mandatory evacuation/relocation has been implemented and they should go immediately to the Quad or Charles Landing N. Main St. side. Residence Life Area Coordinators, Resident Assistants, will walk through apartments and residences notifying students.
- Residence Life and/or Public Safety staff will respond to locations of students who would need additional assistance.
- Prior to the evacuation, the following precautions should be taken:
 - Students are encouraged to contact their families to apprise them of the weather situation and their planned location during the storm.
 - All doors should be locked when the occupants are not in the room or apartment.
 - All windows should be tightly closed and locked.
 - The Residence Life Staff will check all the Residence Halls and Apartments to see that evacuations are complete.

Stage V – During the Hurricane:

- It is essential that all employees and students stay indoors throughout the entire hurricane. Students must not leave their designated location until directed by the Residence Life Staff. During the peak of the storm, for maximum protection, it is suggested that everyone move away from windows and ensure that all doors are closed. Do not attempt to open windows/doors to see what is happening.

- There is always a lull in the storm when the eye passes through the area. Once the eye passes though, the storm begins again, but from the opposite direction. For everyone's protection – stay indoors.
- Students should report problems of an emergency nature (e.g., roof leaks, broken windows) to Public Safety at 401.454.6666. Issues of a non-emergency nature should be reported to members of the Residence Life Staff.

Stage VI – Post Hurricane:

- Following the lifting of the Hurricane Watch by the National Weather Service, the Facilities and Public Safety Departments will inspect the campus and surrounding area and will make a damage survey.
- Students are to remain in the designated location until instructed to leave by Residence Life Staff.
- The AVP of Facilities will coordinate damage repair and clean up.
- The Dean of Students will determine (based on this report) which Residence Halls and Apartments can be used safely.
- The EVP Finance and Administration will determine (based on reports from the AVP Facilities) which Administrative and Academic buildings may be used safely.
- The President will issue necessary directives and instructions concerning the re-opening of school.
- Students are encouraged to contact their families regarding their safety and local conditions.